Non-Emergency Health Care

702.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a daily triage system of inmate requests for health care services. This is to ensure that the health needs of the population are addressed properly and in a timely manner.

702.2 POLICY

It is the policy of this office to provide daily access to qualified health care professionals in order for inmates to request medical services. All health care requests will be documented, triaged, and referred appropriately by medical staff. Qualified health care professionals will conduct sick calls and clinics for health care services on a scheduled basis to ensure a timely response to requests for medical services.

The contract medical provider, in coordination with the Chief Deputy of Corrections or the authorized designee, is responsible for developing a process that includes:

(a) A process for inmates to request health services on a daily basis.

(b) A priority system for health care services to acquire and address requests for routine health care, and for urgent or emergent injuries, illnesses and conditions.

(c) Making health care request process available in each housing unit and to all inmates.

(d) A system, in which health care requests are documented, triaged, and referred appropriately.

(e) Restrictions that prohibit non-health services personnel from diagnosing or treating illnesses or injuries.

702.3 HEALTH CARE REQUESTS

During the collection of health care requests from inmates, care should be taken to protect the confidentiality of the inmate and the nature of the health issue. The requests shall be triaged to determine the priority of need and the proper place for health care to be delivered.

Inmates will be instructed on how to obtain medical services during the inmate medical screening and in the inmate handbook.

Inmates who communicate in a language not available in the printed form shall have access to interpreter services.

Inmates with disabilities should be provided with appropriate assistance or accommodation to ensure they are able to request health care services.

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702.4 TRIAGE OF HEALTH CARE REQUESTS

Qualified health care professionals shall perform a daily triage. Sick calls shall be available to inmates at least three days a week and shall be performed by a qualified health care professional.

Other qualified health care professionals should schedule inmates in need of specialized treatment for the next available providers' clinic. The qualified health care professional shall document the referral in the providers' scheduling book and on the inmate's medical record.

The frequency and duration of sick calls should be sufficient to meet the needs of the inmate population but should be conducted at least weekly by a qualified health care professional. If an inmate's custody status precludes attendance at sick call, arrangements shall be made to provide sick call services in the place of the inmate's detention.

702.5 GUIDELINES FOR ELECTIVE PROCEDURES OR SURGERY

The contract medical provider and the Chief Deputy of Corrections or designee shall work cooperatively to develop guidelines that govern elective procedures or surgery for inmates. The guidelines must include decision-making processes for elective procedures or surgery that is needed to correct a substantial functional deficit or an existing pathological process that threatens the well-being of the inmate over a period of time. Any discussion of this nature with the inmate should be conducted in a language easily understood by the inmate and should be carefully documented in the inmate's medical record. This record should be maintained in accordance with established records retention schedules.

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